



Holland Bloorview
Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

Accessibility Status Report

2021 - 2022

Purpose

The 2021-2022 annual Accessibility Status report is Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital's commitment to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and Holland Bloorview's [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2021-2026](#).

Background

Accessibility is a key priority for Holland Bloorview. We not only prioritize the clients we serve, but also the employees and volunteers who serve our organization so that we can strive to model being a top employer.

Under the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 \(AODA\)](#), Holland Bloorview must meet specific requirements of the AODA. There are general compliance requirements which must be met every year. This includes ensuring there is accessible information, transportation, communication, public spaces, policy employment, customer service, educational reception, healthcare access emergency procedures and training.

During the strategy refresh exercise in 2019 we heard clearly from our clients and their families to elevate the hospital's commitment to accessibility and to incorporate accessibility as part of the EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) agenda. As a result, Accessibility was added to the EDI lens.

In July 2022, the EDI office was renamed the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) office. This revised lens is now being infused in all our operations and care services, including the current strategic planning process.

Accomplishments in Accessibility 2021-2022

Holland Bloorview has accomplished many milestones to create a more accessible and inclusive culture and environment. These achievements are listed in chronological order, the better to demonstrate the overarching work that takes place in our teaching hospital. In many cases the end product was the result of months of collaboration with internal programs, community stakeholders and centred in client and family partnership. Some of the foundational pieces that we introduced as part of our accessibility planning are listed below.

Rick Hansen Foundation's Accessibility Audit: Gold Certification (May 2021)

In May 2021, the Rick Hansen Foundation conducted an accessibility audit on Holland Bloorview hospital. In March 2022, Holland Bloorview received [Gold Certification from the Rick Hansen Foundation](#). The hospital achieved an 82 percent accessibility rating, awarding it with gold certification. The hospital's certification is valid until the year 2026, which will provide opportunity for us to further improve accessibility around its infrastructure and systems for the benefit of employees, clients and clients' families.

Social Advocacy: Dear Everybody campaign (September 2021)

Holland Bloorview's [Dear Everybody](#) campaign is a public awareness initiative that aims to counter the stigmas and stereotypes surrounding disabled children and youth, replacing these misconceptions with a culture of accessibility and inclusiveness. The fifth and final year of the campaign was the open challenging of ableism and how able-bodied people can assist in building an accessible society.

Accessible Parking Study (December 2021)

This extensive project, created by students of the University of Toronto Masters of Science in Planning, offers strategies and best practices for expanding the capacity of the hospital's parking facilities, while enhancing its safety, convenience, and accessibility.

Social Impact, Program and Community Outreach (December 2021)

Two workshops were held for the benefit of employees, students and volunteers:

- **Ableism 101: What does Ableism look like?** Disability rights advocates Fran Odette and Ingrid Palmer led a discussion to educate staff about ableism in the workplace and society.
- [The Impact of Ableism on Persons with Disabilities](#) explored ableism in the workplace and career development, alongside a panel of in-house and community disability rights advocates including

Employment (2021 – 2022)

Holland Bloorview continues to be the co-site host for the [Project SEARCH Toronto](#) program, now in its third year. This is an internationally recognized transition to work training program for high school students with intellectual disabilities. It combines hands-on work experience with an employment life skills curriculum, employment planning and support. Our Toronto partners include: Community Living Toronto (employment support provider), Ontario Disability Employment Network, Toronto Rehab-UHN (co-site host), Toronto District School Board (education lead), and United Way Greater Toronto. Ten students were enrolled during the 2021/22 school year. In 2021/22 we also introduced virtual workshops and webinars for youth and families on topics related to life after high school, transition to post-secondary education transition and career planning.

Creating Inclusive Playgrounds: A Playbook of Considerations and Strategies (July 2022)

[Creating Inclusive Playgrounds: A Playbook of Considerations and Strategies](#) was developed by the Bloorview Research Institute's Engagement & Planning for Inclusive Communities (EPIC) lab. It is a comprehensive playbook for planning and designing a playground that fully includes disabled children and adults. It's based on an international scan of 125 reports on accessible playground design, inclusive play studies, and collaboration with the universities of Toronto and Alberta and an American inclusive designer.

Social Advocacy: Imagine Everybody campaign (September 2022)

Holland Bloorview's [Imagine Everybody](#) builds on the success of the award winning [Dear Everybody](#). It seeks to normalize the inclusion of children with disabilities at an early age and set up for re-imagining a non-ableist future, where one can "imagine a world where disability is included".

Accessible Door Audit (October 2022)

Holland Bloorview's Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) finalized an audit to investigate the accessibility of all doors at the hospital and which doors negatively impact the freedom of movement for the patients. The results have been submitted for capital review with an intent to prioritize which doors to fix in 2023 – 2024.

Community engagement (December 2022)

As an acknowledgement of International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Holland Bloorview's Youth Advisory Committee did a book launch of [As I live and breathe](#) a collection of short stories written by authors with lived experience of disability. The event included an author reading and panel, as well as an exhibition featuring the participants' work. The stories cover

a wide range of topics and highlight how, even though disability is a deeply personal experience, there are common themes within the experiences of disability.

Expansion of Accessible Documentation Training (2021 – 2022)

In 2020, Holland Bloorview's IDEA office hired its first Accessibility Support Coordinator. As they approach the 3rd year of their role, the coordinator is now doing outreach with individual departments on a staggered basis to provide accessibility reviews for their most widely utilized client and family facing documents. This will ensure almost universal document accessibility for client and family facing documents.

Note: The coordinator's role includes the provision of accessibility workshops, whereby they guide hospital staff, volunteers, and external participants in drafting accessible documentation on commonly-used computer programs in deference to the AODA's legal obligations for accessible information, communication, and customer service. The coordinator also reviews the AODA for legislative updates and additions. Workshops continued to be offered on a regular basis, and are recorded for ease of access.

Looking Ahead: 2023 and Beyond

For more details, please reference Holland Bloorview's [Multi-year Accessibility Plan 2021 - 2026](#), *p. 27 – 30 Future Accessibility Plans*

Physical accessibility (Elements of these goals are derived from the 2021 accessibility audit by the Rick Hansen Foundation)

- Installing vertical signage to facilitate users locating a designated accessible bay.
- Installing colour contrasting markings on glazed doors and panels which could help alert users with a sight impairment.
- Washroom doors/stall doors be equipped with power doors to accommodate any user as manual doors make it difficult for someone using an assistive device to access the toilets.
- Consider providing shelter at the accessible parking spaces to ensure users are protected during weather extremities.
- Consider providing shelter on some of the main access routes around the perimeter of the building and the reactional space. This will benefit all users during periods of inclement weather.
- Replace Bell Relay Service with TextNet which is perceived as an improved phone service for auditory disabilities and that the IDEA office is investigating options for bringing captioning service to its in person meetings.

Other key highlights we want to accomplish in 2023:

- **Innovation and Education** – Under the leadership of the IDEA office, Holland Bloorview has taken the initial steps to develop its own AODA training module for future employees. It is anticipated that an updated version of the training module which incorporates legislative changes will be rolled out in 2023 – 2024.
- **Updated training** – as we are anticipating new changes in legislation, there will be new training opportunities explored; continual learning built from previous opportunities.
- **Web Content & Website Changes** – With the new accessible website features in place, we will be focusing on compliance of web content requirements and refreshing of web pages to reflect the changes of legislation and provide resources, tools and education.
- **Continuing to be top employer and to model best practices** – to explore integrating current accommodation and accessibility planning practices that have been in place for students.
- **Evolving the more Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) lens** – to strengthen this resource tool for employees in order to maximize feasibility for utilization in their roles.
- **Up-to-date Accessibility policies** – efforts will be made to ensure that policies continue to be up-to-date so that they can be implemented in ways that are not just in compliance, but also allow for Holland Bloorview to continue to be one of the best leaders on the work of accessibility and being a model employer.
- **Continued recruitment for new members APAC and updating the terms of reference** - to continue building capacity organizationally and to ensure appropriate representation and prioritizing of voices and expertise.

Please let us know if you have any questions or feedback about activities, initiatives, and programs highlighted in this report and in the 2021-2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, as well as accessibility matters in general.

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